

Stockport Board Priorities

21 Feb 2010

Introduction

1. The **first part** of this paper picks-up from the recent half-day sessions at which the Stockport Board discussed its focus and preferred role following the Comprehensive Spending Review and substantial changes to the partnership performance framework. It suggests a future meeting structure to help the Board focus on its priorities and will be accompanied by a outline forward work programme (to follow) that the Board are asked to comment on, add to and **agree**.
2. The **second part** of the paper describes the strategic partnership tier that will be central to carrying forward the Board's priority actions. It **invites** the Board to take a clearer and more active role in steering the Public Services Resources Board and the Place Board and in synthesising the work of the two bodies.

Part 1 - Stockport Board: forward focus

3. At its meeting on 19 January 2011 the Stockport board agreed that it wanted to move away from a retrospective focus to provide greater forward looking strategic leadership. It will do this principally by focusing more on discussion and decision of actions in support of a limited number of priorities, and less on performance management of thematic partnerships.
4. Members want the Stockport Board to be better able to respond to the current fast pace of change, to be more flexible and to focus on those things that:
 - **Add value to wider partnership working** - making us all more efficient and effective; and that
 - **Only the strategic partnership can do**
5. The Board have agreed this approach in order to more clearly describe the unique role of their work in relation to other partnerships; to better value the seniority and broad oversight that the Board offer; to focus on action and finding solutions to priority issues; and to be better able to respond to the Board's collective analysis of present challenges and opportunities in Stockport.
6. To best put this action focused approach into practice the Board are asked to agree that future meetings will follow a defined structure, with issues for consideration suggested and agreed by partners in advance, through the Partnership secretariat in consultation with the Chair. A specimen agenda describing this structure is enclosed at **Annex A** for comment.

Part 2 – The Strategic Partnership Tier

7. Tackling entrenched inequalities in Stockport's most deprived neighbourhoods and making best use of the partnership's resources in their broadest sense are two paramount strategic priorities that cut across thematic and other issues. The partnership has created the Place Board (PB) and Public Services Resources Board (PSRB) to focus specifically on these two areas.
8. In recent discussions, partners have expressed a mixed view of the purpose and remit of the two bodies. To clarify:
 - **The PSRB** exists to develop a partnership approach to optimising the use of public resources in the Borough on behalf of the Stockport Partnership. It is currently undertaking substantial pieces of work to develop a partnership estates strategy (discussed elsewhere on this agenda) and a partnership Local Information System. Partnership approaches to resources and workforce are being explored with reference to the Greater Manchester Community Budget pilot;
 - **The Place Board** exists to develop effective and sustainable practice whereby the life chances experienced by residents in Stockport's priority communities, and identified in the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, are tackled and improved. The Place Board has established partnership Neighbourhood Management structures in three Priority 1 areas, and is also developing a partnership approach (Act Family) to supporting families with complex needs.
9. The Stockport Board is the accountable body for the work of the Place Board and PSRB. As such, **it is recommended that the Stockport Board should provide an active, consistent and strategic steer to these two bodies.**
10. The specimen agenda described at **Annex A** proposes that reports from the Chair of the Place Board (currently Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive, SMBC) and Chair of the PSRB (currently Steve Houston, Corporate Director for Business Services, SMBC) should be made a standing item at the Stockport Board. These need not necessarily be written reports.
11. This recommendation is intended to help all partners better understand the unique role of the three strategic tier partnerships, and provide a framework within which these partnerships add value to each other's work, reducing the risk of duplication. Specifically, the intention is for the work of the Place Board and PSRB to be:
 - Communicated to partners more broadly, so that new opportunities can be explored, problems can be resolved and innovations and best practice can be scaled up and shared more quickly; and

- Synthesised, where appropriate, into a more coherent strategic picture, and linked more closely to the priorities and focus of the Stockport Board.

12. In order to achieve these aims **it is also recommended** that the sequencing of meetings of the three Strategic partnerships be more closely aligned.

Specimen agenda for future Partnership meetings – for comment

For action / decision (c.60 mins)

A **substantive and interactive discussion of a priority** issue per meeting. These issues will be agreed in advance, and drawn from a forward plan of priorities that will be updated for each meeting.

The item will be **accompanied by a full background report** and a clear analysis of the problem that needs resolving or a set of options for deliberation.

For discussion (c.50 mins)

Reports back on progress of previously commissioned work;

Reports up from the Chairs of the PSRB and Place Board.

Oversight and input into partnership strategies. These will be drawn from a forward log that will be updated at each meeting.

For noting (c.10 mins)

Minutes of previous meeting.

Reports for information (ad hoc)